

Maryland WIC

help me be healthy

Birth to
6
months



I am your baby.

You want the best for me.

My name is _____.

I weigh _____ pounds and _____ ounces.

I am _____ inches tall.

A special note for me _____

Feed me **with food and love**

- I grow best with your love. Hold me and cuddle me.
- I feel your love when you smile and talk to me.
- Listen to me when I “talk” to you with my face and body.
- Feed me breast milk. It is the only food I need for the first 6 months.
- If I am not breastfed, feed me baby formula.
- Wait until my first birthday before you give me cow’s milk.



Help me eat well from the start, let me show you how

When you help me eat well, I suck, swallow, and breathe at my own pace. When I don't eat too much, I spit up less and we both feel good!

I will let you know when I am hungry.

Feed me when I get restless, suck on my hands, or turn my head for food. Please don't wait until I cry. I eat best when I am calm.

Feed me just enough.

When you feed me breast milk or formula from a bottle:

- Please use a bottle with straight sides and slow-flow nipple.
- Hold me upright, supporting my neck and shoulders with your hand.
- Gently touch my lips with the nipple, and wait until I open my mouth wide.
- Let me take the whole nipple in my mouth.
- Hold the bottle level, then tip it slightly to half-fill the nipple.

Let's work together.

- When I need to take a break or burp, I may try to push the bottle away or turn my head.
- If I gasp, choke, or cough, tip the bottle down briefly until I am ready to go on.

I will tell you when I am full.

- When I've had enough, I will turn away, push the bottle away, or fall asleep.
- Please don't keep trying to feed me. I know when I've had enough.



How do you know if I eat enough?

You will know I eat enough when I wet 6 or more diapers a day, and the doctor says I am gaining weight and growing well. Please do not put me on a feeding schedule. I will let you know when I am hungry or full.

I need to eat often because I can't eat very much at one time.

Birth to 4 months

I might eat every 2 to 3 hours, about 8 to 12 times in 24 hours. My tummy can only hold about 2 to 3 ounces at a time.

4 to 6 months

I might eat every 3 to 4 hours, about 6 to 8 times in 24 hours. My tummy can hold about 4 to 6 ounces at a time.

I will grow faster some days. I will need to eat more at these times.

My growth spurts may come at 7 to 10 days, 2 to 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months old.



Give me safe food

I can get sick from germs and the wrong food. I could throw up and get diarrhea.

- Wash your hands before you feed me.
- Mix up formula the way the can says or how the doctor tells you.

Keep breast milk up to 72 hours (3 days) in the refrigerator.

Keep concentrate formula up to 48 hours (2 days) in the refrigerator.

Keep formula made from powder up to 24 hours (1 day) in the refrigerator.

- Never heat a bottle of breast milk or formula in a microwave oven. It could burn my mouth.
- If you want to warm my milk put it in a small pan of warm water.
- Throw out breast milk or formula kept out more than 1 hour or left in the bottle after I eat.
- Do not feed me plain water, sugar water, or honey.

When can I try new food?

For now, I grow best on breast milk or formula. Please do not feed me other food until I turn 6 months old. Then, ask my doctor if I am ready. Please talk to WIC if you have questions about feeding me.

I need your touch

Hold me when you feed me.

I feel safe in your arms. Look at my face and into my eyes. Smile and talk to me. I will learn to smile and coo. I might stop in the middle of eating to rest and look at you.



Spit up, gas, and dirty diapers

I might spit up if you try to feed me when I am full or if you bounce me after I eat.

I swallow air when I eat. Too much air makes me spit up or have gas. Burping helps me get the air out. Wait for me to stop eating before you burp me. Hold me so my tummy touches your chest or lap. Gently pat or rub my back.

I might grunt and turn red to move my bowels.

I might have 1 to 3 bowel movements a day or none

for a day or 2. This is not constipation. Constipation is a hard, dry stool that hurts to pass and makes me cry.



Let's play

- Put me on my back on a blanket on the floor. Watch how I stretch and kick my legs and arms.
- Put me on my tummy. I will learn to push myself up with my arms and roll over.
- Let's play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.

Be sure I sleep:

- Alone (even twins, triplets, or more) but near to you.
- On my back with my head uncovered, no pillow or blanket.
- In an empty bassinet, crib, or play yard with:
 - firm mattress with a fitted sheet
 - no bumpers, wedges, or sleep positioner
 - no toys, mobiles, or crib gyms.



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Look what I can do!

I am ready to learn about you, about me, and the world I live in. I learn best when I feel happy, loved, and safe.

Birth to 3 months

The world is new to me. It can be scary. Crying is my way to say I need you. When you come to me, I calm down. I learn that you care.

I must learn what day and night are. At first, I sleep 2 to 3 hours, wake up, eat, and go back to sleep again. It might take 3 or 4 months to learn to sleep through the night.

I know your voice. I like to watch you. Tell me what you are doing. Hearing your words helps me learn to talk.

4 to 6 months

I can sleep longer at night.
I am growing strong and active.

I can hold my head up. I use my hands to pick things up and put them in my mouth.
Watch me so I don't choke.

I know my name when you say it. I babble "ba-ba-ba!"
I can laugh.



Keep me safe and healthy

- I need checkups and shots. Take me to the doctor a few days after birth and before 1 month, then when I am 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months old.
- If I am breastfed, ask the doctor about vitamin D drops.
- Wipe my gums with a clean, wet, soft cloth after you feed me.
- As my teeth come in, brush them with a small soft toothbrush and a smear of fluoride toothpaste twice a day, every day, especially before bed.
- Keep me away from smoke, matches, lighters, and vaping tools. I can be poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing e-cigarette liquid through my skin or eyes.
- If you own a gun, please keep it locked in a safe place.
- Never leave me alone at bath time or while changing me.
- Buckle me into an infant car seat in the car. Learn how to install the seat correctly, in the car's back seat, facing backwards.



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Better Nutrition Brighter Future

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